

I am unabashedly proud of what my home State has accomplished. The formation of the National Governors' Ethanol Coalition was one of the important steps. Nebraska and several other Midwestern States created this coalition that now consists of 26 States and one U.S. territory, as well as Brazil, Canada, Mexico, and Sweden. Since its formation in 1991, the Governors' Ethanol Coalition has worked to expand national and international markets for biofuels. American firms are working with India, Thailand, Colombia, and other countries to help them establish biofuels industries.

Within the State of Nebraska, during the period from 1991–2001, seven ethanol plants were constructed and several of these facilities were expanded more than once during the decade. Specific benefits of the ethanol program in Nebraska include:

\$1.15 billion in new capital investment in ethanol processing plants.

1,005 permanent jobs at the ethanol facilities and 5,115 induced jobs directly related to plant construction, operation, and maintenance. Average salaries at the ethanol processing facilities range from \$38,000–\$56,000 depending on geographic location. The permanent jobs generate an annual payroll of \$44 million.

More than 210 million bushels of corn and grain sorghum is processed at the plants annually. Economists at Purdue University and the USDA estimate that the price of corn increases from 9.9 cents–10 cents per bushel for every 100 million bushels of new demand. Local price basis increases in Nebraska range from 5–15 cents.

The trend of marketing wet distillers grains for cattle feeding generates at least \$41 million in increased economic activity annually according to a 1999 report by the University of Nebraska. Of the \$41 million increase, 85 percent accrues to cattle feeders in the form of reduced costs and increased gains, and 15 percent accrues to the plants.

Local tax bases are more diversified in areas where plants are located. Several smaller communities have experienced increases in housing construction and new business start-ups associated with services related to plant operations.

Jobs among the skilled trades have increased. Pipe fitters, steamfitters, steel workers, and construction engineering trades are involved in plant construction.

Value is added to grain processed at ethanol plants. Today, a \$2.00 bushel of corn is processed into products worth at least \$5.00. Gasoline purchased from refineries outside Nebraska is displaced by ethanol produced in the State, thereby retaining energy dollars in the local economy.

These economic benefits have increased each year during the past decade due to plant expansion, employment increases, and additional capital investment.

If each State followed the Minnesota and Nebraska models, which are dif-

ferent in several respects, and produced 10 percent of its own domestic, renewable fuels, America will have turned the corner and that noose of oil-import dependency and climate change will begin to loosen.

I know there is doubt among my colleagues from States without farm crops about the ability to provide the needed starch, sugar, or oil seed crops to produce biofuels and other biorefinery products. There are more than adequate supplies of cellulosic biomass in each State to meet the 10 percent goal: agricultural and forestry crops and residues; rights-of-way, parks, yard and garden trimmings; and the clean portion of the biomass fraction of our municipal waste.

A major resource commitment is needed in this country to ensure that, 10 years from now, we have established the commercial technology base to produce many billions of gallons per year of renewable fuels, in dispersed and decentralized installations around the nation. The feedstocks must be diversified with the end uses ranging from gasoline to diesel to aviation fuels. We also need to quantify the "externality costs" of our current imported oil dependence, in order to ensure we are not paying those costs 10 years from now.

Over the past few days, we have learned that we cannot drill our way out of our dangerous oil dependency. We have decided to support a renewable energy portfolio standard that will increase our use of renewable resources like solar, wind, geothermal, hydro, and biomass to produce electricity.

We sue very little oil to produce electricity. We use oil to power our transportation sector. That is where we are most vulnerable.

The renewable fuels standard is absolutely necessary in order to expand the biofuels industry into the use of cellulosic biomass, which is in great abundance throughout the United States.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, Senator MURKOWSKI is present. As I indicated, he was obligated to attend a funeral this afternoon. We have a unanimous consent request we would like to offer. I want to make sure it is cleared on the other side. Until we get that done, what I ask is Senator STABENOW be recognized as in morning business for 10 minutes, and then the Senator from Missouri, Mrs. CARNAHAN, be recognized as in morning business for 6 minutes. Then we will proceed to offering the unanimous consent agreement with Senator MURKOWSKI.

As I indicated earlier, what we will do is ask that there be 60 minutes equally divided and a vote, so there will be a vote at about 5:15 today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Michigan.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to my colleagues today about an incredibly important issue, and that is the question of the rising costs of health care, particularly as it relates to the cost of prescription drugs. I think the headline in this week's Washington Post column by David Broder said it all: Our health care system is in a "death cycle."

The greatest country in the world, the most extensive health care system in the world, most sophisticated system, and we have a respected columnist saying it is in a death cycle. I suggest one of the major reasons for this is the uncontrollable cost of prescription drugs in this country.

There is something wrong when we are involved as taxpayers, as Americans, in funding research for prescription drugs—which I support—providing tax credits for research and development for the companies to be able to do incredibly important, lifesaving research. Yet we in the United States of America pay the highest prices of anyone in the world. That is not an exaggeration—higher than anyone in the world.

If you are uninsured—and particularly for our seniors who may use 18 different medications in a year; that is the average—if you are uninsured, if you are someone walking in and paying retail, you pay the most of anyone anywhere in the United States and the world.

This is extremely troubling. We are not talking about buying something that is optional; we are talking about lifesaving medications. Whether I am talking to my hospital administrators or the Big Three auto companies or small businesses or senior citizens or a family with a disabled child or anyone who is involved in purchasing prescription drugs, I hear the same thing over and over: We have a system that is broken. It is broken. We have to fix it.

I am here today asking my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to join with us in that sense of urgency about fixing this problem.

Whenever we talk about costs, we hear from the companies that in order to lower costs we will lose valuable research. None of us wants to lose research. We support that. We support funding research. We will do that again this year. But the facts do not show us that we have to suffer and lose research in order to lower costs.

We know that among the largest companies, on average, they spend twice as much on advertising and promotion as they do on research. We also know in an average year there will be about 88,000 people working to promote and to advertise prescription drugs and on average 48,000 people involved in research. There are 88,000 people involved in promoting and advertising, 48,000 involved in research.

I think every American knows, just by turning on the television set, that

we have seen an explosion in advertising. Unfortunately, what has happened is we have seen that explosion in advertising causing an explosion in our costs of 18 percent to 20 percent a year.

Something is wrong when there are almost twice as many people involved in promoting a drug and advertising a drug as there are people researching new medications. There is also something wrong when we can go across the bridge or through the tunnel to Canada—Mr. President, that is 5 minutes in Michigan. We can go across the bridge and we can cut our costs in half for American-made, FDA-approved medications.

I have twice taken a group of seniors across the border, going through the Canadian medical society, and then going into the Canadian pharmacies. We have seen dramatic results. I will just share a couple.

In Michigan, Zocor, a drug to reduce cholesterol, costs \$109.73 for 50 5-milligram tablets. In Canada, the exact same prescription costs \$46.17—\$109.73 and \$46.17. Since we as taxpayers in the United States have helped to subsidize the research—which I support doing—I also want to see us get a price break for the tax dollars that are helping to do this.

I also know that tamoxifen, a breast-cancer-treating drug, is available for about \$136 in Michigan. When we went to Canada, with breast cancer patients, they got it for \$15. There is something wrong with the laws that say our people cannot freely go back and forth—our hospitals, our businesses—and get those lower costs.

There is something wrong with a system where small businesses are seeing 25, 30, 35 percent or more increases in their health care premiums. I have had small business people come to me saying they will have to drop their insurance because they cannot afford the premium increases. The majority of that is the cost of prescription drugs.

We have a lot of work to do. There is something wrong in a country as blessed and as wealthy as the United States when there are seniors who got up this morning, sat at the kitchen table, and said: Do I eat today or do I take my medicine? Do I pay the electric bill or do I take my medicine?

We can do better than that. We have an obligation to do better than that. I believe one piece of that is Medicare coverage and updating our Medicare system to cover prescription drugs. But I believe it is also much more than that. I believe it is making generics available once the patent has run its course and finding ways to make sure those laws are enforced and not undermined. It is making sure that research is done, and we reward and help fund that, and invest in that more than we are investing in advertising. It is making sure our business community can afford premiums, that we have competition across the border, making sure we are able to provide prescriptions at the lowest possible cost while still al-

lowing important research to happen and our pharmaceutical industry to thrive.

I believe we can do all of that if we have a focus on the right values and priorities when it comes to this debate.

I simply say it is now time for a sense of urgency. If a child in our family is sick or if we have a parent who needs lifesaving medication and can't afford it, if we have someone in our family who needs an operation, we feel a sense of urgency. We feel a sense of urgency if someone needs nursing home care or if someone needs some other kind of health care.

We need that same kind of sense of urgency when it comes to public policy on health care.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join with us in the coming weeks to lower the fastest growing part of that health care dollar; that is, the cost of prescription drugs and lifesaving medication.

We can do better than we are doing for our seniors and our families. We can do better than we are doing for the business community. We can do better than we are doing for everybody in our country if we are willing to get to work. I hope we are going to do that.

I yield the floor.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senator from Missouri completes her statement, Senator MURKOWSKI be recognized to offer his Iraqi oil import amendment; that there be 60 minutes for debate prior to the vote in relation to the amendment with the time equally divided and controlled in the usual form; that there be no intervening amendment in order prior to the vote in relationship to the Murkowski amendment; that upon the use or yielding back of the time without further intervening action or debate the Senate proceed to vote in relation to the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order to ask for the yeas and nays on the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CORZINE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

LEAVE NO CHILD BEHIND ACT

Mrs. CARNAHAN. Mr. President, last year, Democrats and Republicans joined together with President Bush to enact a monumental and far-reaching education bill.

This new law, the Leave No Child Behind Act, will bring new resources and meaningful reform to our Nation's schools.

It establishes new academic standards for students, increases teacher training, and demands new levels of accountability, while increasing flexibility with Federal funds at the State and local level.

I am hopeful that this law will help close the achievement gaps that separate many poor and minority students from their peers.

Indeed, I am optimistic that it will improve education for all students.

But Congress has, as Harry Truman once said, some "unfinished business" when it comes to our schools.

We have left out a critical component when it comes to ensuring that our schools and our teachers and, most importantly, our students will succeed.

Today, one in five schools fails to meet building or safety codes or needs extensive repairs, renovations, and maintenance.

Across the country, run-down, overcrowded, dilapidated schools jeopardize the health and safety of our students.

Across the country, deteriorating schools inhibit the ability of our children to learn.

And yet, with the exception of the Impact Aid program, which I strongly support, the new education reform law did not include funds for school renovation and repair.

Nor were any funds for renovation and repair made available through the appropriations process.

The administration's most recent budget even eliminates the Emergency School Repair Program.

And yet, data from the National Center for Education Statistics tells us that nearly \$127 billion in renovations and repairs are needed to upgrade existing schools to good physical condition.

Furthermore, this figure does not include the funding needed for construction to accommodate increasing enrollments in districts across the country.

We have these pressing needs at a time when resources are scarce. Our States and local governments are still feeling the effects of the recession.

And for too many years, Congress has failed to provide States and localities the funding it promised long ago to share the cost of special education.

The Federal Government cannot ask States and localities to shoulder the burden of school renovation and repair costs alone.

If the Federal Government stands on the sidelines, it will be at the expense of our children.

But neither should Washington attempt to single-handedly solve this problem. Congress should not be in the business of giving direct grants to communities to build schools.

I strongly believe that education is a national priority but a local responsibility.

The legislation being introduced today, the "Investing for Tomorrow's